



School Anxiety Toolkit

WHAT CAN I DO?	HAVE I DONE THIS? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>STEP ONE: My child’s anxiety has increased.</p> <p>Contact the GP or another medical/mental health professional. Ask for advice on easing your child’s anxiety about their return to school.</p> <p>The NHS Website has further information on how to get appointments and can provide information on waiting times, or timescales: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/gps/gp-appointments-and-bookings/</p> <p>If the GP or another medical/ mental health professional determines that the child is not currently well enough to attend school, ask for a letter to be written, explaining this. This could provide evidence for non-attendance and provide professional advice.</p> <p>Please note that government guidance for schools, on <i>Summary of Responsibilities where a Mental Health issue is Affecting Attendance</i>, states that schools do not need to routinely ask for medical evidence. In instances of long-term or repeated absences for the same reason, however, schools seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods.</p> <p>Your school may have a Mental Health Lead. Contact them to explain about your child’s symptoms, share your concerns with them and any letter from the GP.</p> <p>School staff must record absences as authorised where it is not possible for a pupil to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).</p> <p>For more information on the government guidance <i>Summary of Responsibilities where a Mental Health Issue is Affecting Attendance</i>, visit the government website, click here: Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)</p>	<p>If you are waiting for an appointment, continue to step two.</p>

STEP TWO: My child's anxiety symptoms have not improved.

Speak to a member of staff at the school. You could speak to:

- **Your child's Class Teacher (for primary school aged children)**
- **Your child's Form Tutor (some secondary schools have Form Tutors)**
- **Your child's Head of Year (some secondary schools have a designated Head of Year)**
- **The school SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator)**
- **The school's Pastoral support, Attendance, Welfare or Inclusion Team**

Government guidance states that the school should be **creating a plan** to implement **reasonable adjustments** to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. Reasonable adjustments can be **actions** taken to help support attendance.

Discuss your child's anxieties with them, to see if the root cause can be found and strategies put in place to help your child ease those anxieties, at school. The strategies for attendance should be agreed by and **regularly reviewed** with all parties, including parents/carers. The plan should have regular review points in it, **agreed in advance** of the implementation. The plan may include **pastoral support**. The plan may include **referrals** to professionals such as counselling services, school nursing services, psychological practitioners or mental health teams.

If your child has an EHC plan, contact your child's Case Officer to explain the situation and what you have done so far. You can request a review of the EHC plan so that any necessary changes can be made to the plan. The Bexley IASS website has more information about EHC plan reviews, click here: [Get Informed - The Education, Health & Care Plan \(EHCP\) - Bexley IASS](#)

STEP THREE: As a parent/carer, my own anxiety is increasing.

For yourself, as a parent, if you are finding this situation stressful, reach out for help. It is important that you safeguard your own well-being, so that you can fully support your child. There is support on offer, for both yourself and your child:

- **Bexley Counselling Matters:** 0800 047 2600
- **Bexley Voice:** www.bexleyvoice.org.uk
- **Carers Support** www.carerssupport.org Tel: 0208 302 8011
- **KOOTH:** www.kooth.com
- **Contact:** www.contact.org.uk
- **MIND:** www.mindinbexley.org.uk Tel: 0208 303 8932
- **Bexley Local Offer:** www.bexleylocaloffer.uk

STEP FOUR: My child's anxiety symptoms have not improved.

Some schools or Academy Trusts have their own Education Welfare Service. If so, contact the school's Education Welfare Service. The details may be on the school website.

Contact the **Education Welfare Service** at Bexley. Email: educationwelfare@bexley.gov.uk . Explain the situation and everything that you have done so far.

STEP FIVE: My child's anxiety symptoms have not improved and are getting worse.

If at any time you have concerns about your child's mental health, please contact **CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) Duty Line** on **0203 260 5200** Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. You can also contact the **SLP (South London Partnership) crisis line** on **020 3228 5980** Monday to Friday 5pm-10pm and Saturday to Sunday 9am to 10pm.

STEP SIX: My child's anxiety symptoms have not improved.

Be reassured that government guidance states that it is **only** "where support offered is **not engaged with**, or **where all other options have been exhausted** or deemed inappropriate, schools should work with Local Authorities to consider whether to **formalise support** (Parenting contract or Education Supervision Order) or to enforce attendance through legal intervention".

Keep in contact with the GP or medical/mental health professional, the school, CAMHS and the Education Welfare Service to update them on the situation and continue to work through child's anxiety. The plan for attendance, and the support in place at school should be reviewed regularly. A review is an opportunity to talk about what is going well and what is not going well, and to make any necessary changes.

A part-time timetable can be considered, however, **parental consent is needed**, it must be **temporary** and schools should consider providing remote education to help pupils stay on track with the education they would normally receive. Any remote education should only be considered if the pupil is well enough and able to learn. You can expect that the remote learning is **differentiated**: tailored to your child's needs. If the learning is too easy or too difficult for your child you can speak to the school to request different learning. A part-time timetable should include support to encourage full-time attendance at school.

You may wish to discuss with the school, an EHC needs assessment request. Often, in a school, it is the SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) who makes an application for an EHC needs assessment. You have a statutory right as a parent to make an application for an EHC Needs assessment, you don't have to rely on the school to do this for you. However, the school will need to evidence how they are supporting your child to establish the need for an EHCP with the Local Authority.

On the Education page on the Bexley IASS website you will find information on how the application for an EHC Needs Assessment works and a checklist for the application. If an EHC plan is issued by the Local Authority, you will be asked for your parental preference for your child's placement, including specialist provision. Click here: [Get Informed - The Education, Health & Care Plan \(EHCP\) - Bexley IASS](#)

DO NOT FEEL UNDER PRESSURE TO DE-REGISTER YOUR CHILD FROM SCHOOL, OR TO HOME EDUCATE YOUR CHILD. There may be difficulties obtaining a school place, after a child is de-registered. Once a child is de-registered, the parent is wholly responsible for their child's education, including any costs.

If you are interested in Elective Home Education, contact **Lorraine Gold**, the **Elective Home Education Officer**, to discuss your options:

Email: lorraine.gold@bexley.gov.uk

Tel: 0203 045 4077

If at any point, you would like information, advice or support, contact Bexley SEND IASS:

Tel no: 020 3025 5976

Email: bexleyiass@bexley.gov.uk

Website: www.bexleyiass.co.uk